



# *Milwaukee County*

Board Chairman Lee Holloway

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Harold Mester, Public Information Manager

414/278-4051 or harold.mester@milwcnty.com

## **CHAIRMAN HOLLOWAY CLARIFIES SEVERAL ITEMS IN COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S "MILWAUKEE COUNTY STATUS REPORT"**

*County Board has led the way on many important policy-making decisions*

**Milwaukee, WI** – Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lee Holloway is responding to County Executive Scott Walker's Milwaukee County Status Report that was released to the media today.

"As the policy-making branch of Milwaukee County, the Board of Supervisors has played an active role in many of the items mentioned in the County Executive's presentation. While he is the County's chief administrator, a number of the items the County Executive cited were initiated and adopted by the County Board."

- The County Executive is taking credit for downsizing the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. In reality, it was the Board itself, under the leadership of Chairman Holloway, that chose to downsize. The County Executive simply supported that decision and signed the redistricting resolution.
- While the County Executive has indeed proposed five consecutive budgets with a \$0 tax levy increase from the previous year, this does not tell the whole story. The Board has actually led the way in avoiding many departmental budget deficits by recognizing the need for modest tax levy increases to support County operations. Every year since he was elected, the County Executive has used the Board's higher tax levy amount in his budget proposal as the base funding level for the following year. **In actuality, from 2003 through 2007, the County Executive's own tax levy budget proposals have increased by nearly \$14 million, an increase of more than six percent. If the County Executive continues to do what he has in past years, in using the previous year's tax levy as his base, he would propose a 2008 Recommended Budget later this year with a tax levy \$22 million higher than his 2003 proposal, a ten percent increase from his first Budget as County Executive.** This is not to say that the County Executive is a big taxer. It just means that, though he doesn't admit it, he has relied on the reasonable and responsible past actions of the County Board to keep the County operating.

- The lawsuit filed against the actuarial firm responsible for recommending pension enhancements was a joint effort between the Board of Supervisors and the Executive. The County Board's Judiciary, Safety and General Services Committee was the driving force that initiated the filing of that lawsuit. Subsequently, the County Board and County Executive joined forces in moving the lawsuit forward.
- In February 2002, *before Scott Walker took office*, the County Board passed several measures that significantly reduced pension and sick leave benefits for elected officials and non-represented workers and cut the pay of the County Executive, Board Chairman and all County Supervisors.
- It was a former County Supervisor, not the County Executive, who introduced a resolution updating the County's ethics code and instituting new restrictions on political contributions. The Board's adoption of this policy was a major step forward. Many Supervisors are pleased with the County Executive's support in carrying out the policy developed and adopted by the County Board.
- The County Executive is taking credit for increasing Parks programming, but it was the County Board that adopted a Budget Amendment to increase funding for expanded Concerts in the Parks.
- An agreement with the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, *adopted by the County Board before Scott Walker became County Executive*, led to the Society paying for much of the \$30 million in improvements at the Milwaukee County Zoo, including the Big Cat Country, Sky Glider, Giraffe Experience, Family Farm, and the Gathering Place.
- The County Executive's aquatics plan was immediately tossed out by the County Board due to a lack of community input. Further, the County Executive did not seek input from the Aquatic Master Plan Study Committee, a group he had created.
- The County Board developed the Park East Redevelopment Compact (PERC) and overrode the County Executive's veto of the PERC, which raised goals for jobs, training, and wages in redeveloping the former Park East Corridor. Developers, not the County Executive, have brought several proposals to the table. The County Board has approved development agreements worth \$317 million. The Board's actions have proven that opportunities can be opened up to developers while still protecting the community's overall interests.

Chairman Holloway added, "Scott Walker is improving as County Executive thanks largely to the help and assistance provided by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. I'm just trying to keep him honest in reference to the actions that were initiated by the County Board."

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